

NEW CIVIC CENTRE TO GRACE DISCREDITED "PASTURE LANDS" OF 1689



BROADWAY NORTH OF VESEY STREET
SHOWING OLD ASTOR HOUSE AND
NEW WOOLWORTH BUILDING.



NEW MUNICIPAL BUILDING, THE GIANT GUARDIAN OF
THE CIVIC CENTRE OF NEW YORK.

Group of Monumental Buildings Will Redeem Part of Chinatown and Little Italy and Open Large Area to Speculative Activity and Building.

RICH in historic associations and being a centre of interest at almost all times, from one point of view or some other, to the great majority of the earlier and present day residents of New York, City Hall Park and its environs to-day combine to form quite the most promising of all the districts into which the city is divided in which a protracted period of active speculation in real estate shortly may be expected to ensue, and continue throughout, if not far beyond, the dates of the completion of the new Municipal Building and the first work in constructing the new County Court House. These two huge structures, one in process of construction, the other just projected, constitute the basic units of the greatly enlarged civic centre, which is designed to be an extension of the present City Hall and Park and has been planned as part of the "City Beautiful" it is definitely purposed to create and maintain.

The General Post Office, City Hall, Hall of Records, Municipal Building and County Court House, together with the Tombs and Criminal Courts Building, further north, in Centre street, form the civic group of to-day.

The sight of this notable centre will, however, be almost entirely cut off from the south by the presence of the massive yet unimpressive General Post Office building, at the entrance to City Hall Park, Park row and Broadway north of Vesey street. This land should revert to the city and be made part of City Hall Park. If this were done and a new Post Office Building erected as part of the new civic centre group, the city would gain large amounts annually because of the higher assessed values that would follow and the consequently increased taxes to be paid by the owners of property in Broadway, Park row and the adjacent side streets, both north and south of Park place.

Senator O'Gorman has declared his intention of working to have this land returned to the city and a new Post Office Building erected as part of the new civic centre group, the city would gain large amounts annually because of the higher assessed values that would follow and the consequently increased taxes to be paid by the owners of property in Broadway, Park row and the adjacent side streets, both north and south of Park place.

The old (Tweed) Court House, now in

City Hall Park, was started in 1861 and completed in 1871. While the Court House was being erected the existing Board of Aldermen leased the present site of the Post Office to the federal government for a consideration of \$500,000, and allowed the present building to be built, effectually shutting out all view of the park and its environs.

Under the terms of this lease it is provided, however, that the land shall revert to the city whenever it shall have ceased to be used for Post Office purposes. The sooner it reverts the better.

The scheme to construct this great civic centre is not a new one, and is designed to occupy land long ago known as the "common lands."

Early in the history of New York it was proposed to use the Dutch Vlakte for a common purpose. This pasture land lay just south of the Collect Pond (part of the East Bayard farm or grant), over, the filled in water of which the old Criminal Courts Building is erected.

The site for the new County Court House is so placed that it will make an adjunct to the civic centre in City Hall Park and extend this feature of the city and its development well to the north in and along the line of Centre street, wiping out a portion of Chinatown and creating a park space to the north. The present Tombs building is located on the far side of this little park. Mulberry Bend Park occupies a clear space to the east, and it is proposed to build a new Criminal Courts building north of the Court House and park, opposite Mulberry Bend Park, at Bayard street.

Early History Recalled.
City Hall Park has had an interesting history, both before and since its plotting by Joseph Mangin, an architect, about one hundred and ten years ago.

Originally at the entrance to the pasture lands which lay between the Dutch village and more northerly Bowery farm lands the Dutch called the entire district "De Vlakte," which meant nothing more or less than "the flat." In the days when Nicholas Bayard and Jacob Leisler were at odds with one another over affairs of government a gallows was set up on "the way to the flat," about east of where the present City Hall stands. On May 16, 1861 Jacob Leisler and Jacob Milborne, his son-in-law, were executed for their act in taking part in and actually leading a movement against the government of King James, who had been elevated to the throne of England in 1686. It is believed that the gallows was the scene of the execution, although it has been stated that Leisler and Milborne were executed on a spot which is now occupied by the World Building.

During the Revolution the "Fields," of which the City Hall Park of to-day formed a part, served as a meeting place for the

leaders and their followers despite the fact that the Provost, a new prison, had been built in 1767.

Edward Livingston, formerly Mayor of New York, laid the corner stone of the City Hall on May 28, 1808. It was built under the supervision of John McComb, who completed it in 1810 at a cost of

\$538,734, a sum far in excess of the original estimate or earlier expectations of the officials of the corporation who met for the first time within the walls of the new structure on July 4, 1810.

Just at this time the building, which had served as both poorhouse and lockup, was removed from the park to Bellevue.

It was not until 1835, however, that the Bridewell, constructed in 1775, was removed, and the Provost long served as a Hall of Records, in fact, for many years after both the Federal Building and the "Tweed" County Court House had been built. When the foundations were dug for the new Federal Building

the excavators ripped out the great fountain which had stood for many years at the apex of the park and which had been put in when New York first obtained its supply of water from the Croton watershed, about in the early forties.

The creation of the proposed new and greatly enlarged civic centre will redeem the long neglected and squalid district east of Centre street, provide suitable, safe and well guarded approaches to the East River bridges, enliven the building of modern structures in the vicinity and so a long way toward settling the question of the future development of that part of Broadway between Chambers and Grand streets, which recently has shown decided tendencies toward a heavy falling off in real estate values.

Another phase of the situation has been the expansion of the financial district in recent years north along Broadway. This trend has been even more evident since the occurrence of the Equitable Building fire, which caused so many hurried removals to other locations.

Only the day previous to the fire announcement was made that the Union and Southern Pacific Railroad Companies were leaving their time honored old headquarters in the Equitable Building, at No. 120 Broadway, and

moving up to the City Investing Building, at No. 165 Broadway.

This removal was even then viewed in Wall street as a telling commentary on the fact that the financial district has outgrown the narrow confines of Wall and Broad streets and is moving northward. Large railroad, industrial and mining corporations have so expanded their activities and increased in such numbers that they are at last compelled to seek quarters further up town. In fact, the opinion prevails in the financial district that in the course of only a few more years Wall street will have overflowed into Park row.

In the last few years there has been a veritable exodus of corporations from the real Wall street centre into the City Investing, the Hudson Terminal, at Cortlandt street, and other buildings. Nearly all the Gould railroad properties, including the Missouri Pacific, the Wabash and the Denver and Rio Grande, are occupying offices on the eighth floor of the City Investing Building. The Sugarco, interests have their extensive offices there, the American Smelting and Refining Company and its affiliated concerns being located on the seventeenth and eighteenth floors.

There are scores of mining companies in the building, including such concerns as Nipissing, Nevada Consolidated, Ray Consolidated and others. Then the Westinghouse interests occupy about two floors, the twenty-first and twenty-second, with the Westinghouse Electric and Manufacturing Company and its allied concerns.

Among other companies are the Chicago and Alton Railroad, the Copper River Railway and the Toledo, St. Louis and Western. The Interborough Rapid Transit Company has long had all its offices in the building.

Wall street has long felt the need of expanding, but the district west of Broadway has not been open adapted to headquarters for corporations or banking houses. Toward the east beyond William street, Wall street has become the centre of the tea and coffee industries. Extension up Nassau street has been checked by the peculiar fact that the insurance companies have absorbed all the properties in the district bounded by Nassau, Pearl, John and Cedar streets. So the only natural course for the financial district to pursue is up along Broadway, where corporations are putting up great office buildings with plenty of floor space, such as the Woolworth Building, at Broadway and Park place.

What more natural than that the army of attorneys and representatives of other forms of professional and business endeavors should follow the lead of these influential interests and make the new civic centre the hub of a building movement that would be entirely capable of completely transforming the wide district lying north of City Hall Park along the lines of Broadway, Centre street, Park row and the Bowery?

Madison Avenue Sale and Lease Indicates Enlargement of Twenty Story Structure

JOSEPH H. MAHAN sold the three-story dwelling, on a lot 165x100, at No. 206 Madison avenue, to John S. Soles, who is understood to be purchasing the property for other interests. The adjoining house, at No. 204 Madison avenue, has been leased for a term of twenty-one years, with an option to purchase, by Mary A. Jordan to Edward M. Gaines. The annual rental is \$5,500. The lessee has the privilege to buy the property any time before February 1, 1913, for \$140,000.

No. 203 Madison avenue, owned by Mary E. Jackson, is, according to her attorney, Robert Struthers, to be sold, providing present negotiations are consummated.

No. 202 Madison avenue stands in the name of Frederick L. Bullard, and No. 201 West Forty-first street, abutting, is held by David P. Barhydt. No. 200 Madison avenue, at the corner of Forty-first street, recently has been put on the market for sale at \$200,000.

The deals just closed have special significance, as the properties adjoin the large holding of the Thompson-Starrett Company, at the southwest corner of Forty-second street and Madison avenue, which will be improved with a modern twenty-story structure. While it is believed that the company is the real purchaser and lessee of Nos. 201 and 202 Madison avenue, no confirmation could be obtained yesterday afternoon.

The Thompson-Starrett holdings include the southwest corner of Madison avenue and Forty-second street, old buildings on a plot 88x114, together with Nos. 19 and 21 East Forty-first street, two dwellings on a plot 42x120. With the group of prop-

erties at the northwest corner of Madison avenue and Forty-first street, the plot would be increased in size to nearly twelve lots, with frontages of 377.8 feet in Madison avenue and 34 feet in both Forty-first and Forty-second streets.

Barnard School at Fieldston.
The Deland estate sold a plot at Fieldston, in the Riverdale section, in the west side of Cayuga avenue, 250 feet south of 248th street, to the Barnard School for Boys, which will erect a large school building, with gymnasium.

Riverside Drive Dwelling Sold.
Pence & Elliman sold for Frieda Armond No. 80 Riverside Drive, a five-story American basement dwelling, on a lot 40x145 irregular, at the north corner of Eighty-third street.

Thirty-Fifth Street Sale.
Frederick Fox & Co. sold for Mary E. St. John, of South Norwalk, Conn., Nos. 511 to 515 West Thirty-fifth street, a plot 75x100, covered with an old two-story stable. The buyer is a business firm in the neighborhood, and after the present lease expires, which will be in about a year, the site will be improved by a mercantile building for the firm's occupancy.

Edgemoor Avenue Operation.
Samuel Green sold to David M. MacLachlan the plot 52x100 in the west side of Edgemoor avenue, at the intersection of 153d street, if extended. The buyer will erect an apartment house on the site. Mr. Green makes a building loan of \$70,000.

Church Sells Edifice.
Madison Square Presbyterian Church, of which Charles H. Parkhurst, pastor, sold

the Adams Memorial Church, at Nos. 207 to 215 East Thirtieth street, near Third avenue, for \$50,000 to the Church Extension Committee of the New York Presbyterian, which will hold the property and permit the congregation to go on as before.

Reports of Unconfirmed Sales.
Samuel T. Reynolds, of Mount Kisco, N. Y., is reported to have sold Nos. 245 to 249 West Twenty-seventh street, three four-story business buildings, on a plot 100x100.

Paul Schivartz is reported to have sold No. 87 West 114th street, a five-story tenement, on a lot 20x100.

Recent Leases.
George R. Read & Co. leased to the D. Van Nostrand Company a lot at No. 25 Park place, running through to No. 23 Murray street.

L. M. Jacobs leased the store at No. 34 Columbus avenue for three years for G. Sidenberg.

Barnett & Co. leased No. 30 East 125th street to the Manhattan Clothing Company; also the store at No. 54 East 125th street.

BUYS TENEMENTS FOR IMPROVEMENT
William H. Archibald sold Nos. 248 to 250 West Twenty-seventh street, three four-story tenements, on a plot 55x100, for the estate of S. B. Reynolds to a client, who contemplates improving the site with a twelve-story store and loft building.

LATEST REPORTS FROM SUBURBS

Indicating the Direction, Character and Extent of Recent Investments in Suburban Realty.

Twelve dwellings are now in the course of construction at Beechhurst, Whitestone Landing, L. I., the development of the Shore Acres Realty Company. Most of these are being built by the company and are expected to be ready for occupancy in the spring. Plans are also being prepared for seven more dwellings, work to be started in February. The company reports the following sales:

To Mrs. Evan M. Homes, the plot, 82x100, in the north side of Thirty-first street, 280 feet from Sixteenth avenue; to Severance Johnson, the plot, 80x100, in the north side of Thirtieth street, 250 feet east of Sixteenth avenue; to William H. Reddy, the plot, 82x100, in the north side of Twenty-ninth street, 180 feet east of Sixteenth avenue; to Paul Seftan, the plot, 100x100, at the southeast corner of Twenty-ninth street and Sixteenth avenue; to Thomas C. Cantrell, the plot, 80x100, in the north side of Twenty-eighth street, 250 feet east of Sixteenth avenue; to Mrs. Augusta Carlson, the plot, 65x100, at the southwest corner of Croyder's lane and Twenty-seventh street; to Arthur L. Storm, the plot, 80x100, in the west side of Sixteenth avenue, 130 feet from Twenty-seventh street, and to Archibald Graham, the plot, 82x100, in the west side of Sixteenth avenue, 55 feet from Croyder's lane.

Staten Island Factory Sold.
H. T. Metcalfe & Sons sold the Loeb property at the corner of Canal and Front streets, adjoining the Municipal Pier, Stapleton, S. I., consisting of a three-story brick factory building with

seven lots and having a frontage of about fifty feet in the Bay, to Hugo Jaburg, of the firm of Jaburg Brothers, who anticipate building a modern factory for the manufacture of bakers' implements and utensils.

Sales at Midwood.
Wood, Harmon & Co. report a number of sales in the Midwoods, including a two-family house in Elmore place, near avenue J, to Clifford M. Holland, and a one-family house in Elmore place, between avenues L and M, to J. C. Waters. Among other sales in this section this week were the following: At Midwood Manor, two lots in Coney Island avenue, near avenue J, to C. B. Hulet; three lots at the northeast corner of Coney Island avenue and avenue K; at East Midwood, two lots in Mansfield place, near avenue I, to Isaac W. Pearson; two lots in Mansfield place, near avenue I, to D. W. Steadman, and two lots in East Twenty-sixth street.

HEIGHTS APARTMENTS UNDER THE HAMMER
Bryan L. Kennelly announces that he will sell at public auction at executors' sale, for the estate of Herman Bergdorf, by order of Gustav Engelke and William Janghaus, executors, the Hearnell and the Kenway, apartment houses, located on Washington Heights.

The Hearnell is in St. Nicholas avenue, between 133d and 135th streets, and is a modern six-story elevator building, with three families on a floor and five, six and seven rooms and bath to each apartment. The plot is 85.95x100 irregular.

The Kenway is located at the northwest corner of Convent avenue and West 150th street, and is a five-story brick apartment, with three families on a floor, having on a plot 198.15x65.92x25, and serving all improvements.

On the same day will be offered for the estate of James Edgar Nos. 231 to 237 West Twenty-fourth street, three four-story brick buildings, No. 233, being a two-story building, on a combined plot 109x175 irregular. The leaseholds of Nos. 231

and 232, and the fee of Nos. 235 and 237, including a large interior plot, are to be sold. Also No. 215 East Fifty-ninth street, a four-story tenement on a lot 25x100.4, and No. 41 West Forty-seventh street, a four-story dwelling, on a lot 25x100.

The same auctioneer will also offer Nos. 347 to 353 Southern Boulevard, seven tenements on a plot 149x350; also Nos. 340 and 312 East 134th street, two four-story tenements, on a plot 125x100; also, the southeast corner of Madison avenue and 124th street, a three-story dwelling, on a lot 20.63x80; also, No. 175 avenue C, a five-story tenement, on a lot 22.85x65; also, No. 71 and 73 Eldridge street, two five-story tenements and store, on a plot 50.53x74; also, No. 281 West Sixteenth street, a four-story apartment house, on a lot 23x33, and Nos. 2316 and 2318 Third avenue, two three-story tenements, on a plot 52x60.

Early Offerings by Many Estates
Manhattan and Brooklyn Parcels Advertised To Be Sold at Special Sale on February 15.

Joseph P. Day will offer at public auction on his next special sales day, Thursday, February 15, in the Vesey street salesroom, a list of Manhattan and Brooklyn parcels, among which are the following:—No. 883 Broome street, a four-story building, on a lot 24.92x108.3, and Nos. 47 and 49 Greene street, a six-story left building, on a plot 48x100. Also for the estate of Heinrich Huckselshausen the southwest corner of Linden street and Evergreen avenue, Brooklyn, three four-story tenements, on a plot 101x24.10.

On the same day will be offered for the estate of James Edgar Nos. 231 to 237 West Twenty-fourth street, three four-story brick buildings, No. 233, being a two-story building, on a combined plot 109x175 irregular. The leaseholds of Nos. 231

and 232, and the fee of Nos. 235 and 237, including a large interior plot, are to be sold. Also No. 215 East Fifty-ninth street, a four-story tenement on a lot 25x100.4, and No. 41 West Forty-seventh street, a four-story dwelling, on a lot 25x100.

The same auctioneer will also offer Nos. 347 to 353 Southern Boulevard, seven tenements on a plot 149x350; also Nos. 340 and 312 East 134th street, two four-story tenements, on a plot 125x100; also, the southeast corner of Madison avenue and 124th street, a three-story dwelling, on a lot 20.63x80; also, No. 175 avenue C, a five-story tenement, on a lot 22.85x65; also, No. 71 and 73 Eldridge street, two five-story tenements and store, on a plot 50.53x74; also, No. 281 West Sixteenth street, a four-story apartment house, on a lot 23x33, and Nos. 2316 and 2318 Third avenue, two three-story tenements, on a plot 52x60.

FAR ROCKAWAY RENTAL.
H. Frankfort rented for Mrs. E. F. W. W. for Max B. Brummer her cottage in Franklin avenue, Far Rockaway.